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THREATS TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE
AND SECURITY AND PEACE
INITIATIVES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-sixth year

Letter dated 22 July 1991 from the representatives of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit herewith the "Declaration of San Salvador", adopted on 17 July 1991 by the Presidents of the six Central American countries at the tenth Summit of the Central American Presidents, held on 15, 16 and 17 July 1991 (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would have this letter and the annex thereto circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 28, and of the Security Council.

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ANNEX

Declaration of San Salvador, adopted on 17 July 1991 at the tenth Summit of the Central American Presidents

The Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama, meeting in the city of San Salvador, Republic of El Salvador, on 15, 16 and 17 July 1991, with the aim of analysing the situation prevailing in the area and of establishing appropriate institutional machinery for the effective attainment of Central American integration in the political, economic, social and cultural domains,

TAKING ACCOUNT of the results of the endeavours undertaken in the quest for peace and the economic and social welfare of our peoples, through respect for human rights, national reconciliation and dialogue, the consolidation of democracy and the strengthening of democratic institutions and the rule of law as well as of machinery to promote a climate of confidence, cooperation and security,

CONSIDERING that the changes and transformations which have taken place in the world in recent years represent a historic time for Central America offering new prospects for the process of integration in the region and the inclusion of Central America in a world order marked by interdependence, the emergence of new forms of integration and cooperation and the effective implementation of international law,

CONVINCED that it is necessary to continue all these endeavours and to incorporate Central America fully into the new international order,

HEREBY AGREE:

1. To reaffirm their commitment to continue to comply fully with the Esquipulas II agreements, whose provisions have led to significant progress in establishing peace and democracy, which are essential conditions for the full enjoyment of freedom within a framework of justice and the promotion of development.

2. To reiterate their conviction that the legitimacy of the public authorities originates in the will of the people, freely expressed in electoral processes.

3. To condemn vigorously violence, terrorism and acts of destabilization against the democratic process as well as the use of violence for political ends.

4. The Presidents of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama again state their acknowledgement of and firm support for the Government of El Salvador and its President, Alfredo Cristiani, and for the

initiatives and measures adopted to strengthen the process of democratization in that country, as evidenced by the existence of a broad political dialogue, the elections of last March, the constitution of an expanded and fully pluralist Legislative Assembly, and the beginning of a process of constitutional reform, primarily intended to reaffirm the supremacy of legitimately constituted authority, establish machinery to guarantee human rights, strengthen the judiciary and the administration of justice and further improve electoral procedures. The Central American Presidents also endorse the firm intention of President Cristiani to continue the quest for peace, national reconciliation and a political solution to internal conflict within El Salvador.

To reiterate once again their condemnation of acts of violence and terrorism, which have no justification whatsoever, and, being fully apprised of the development of the process of dialogue and negotiation and firmly convinced of the existence of the necessary conditions for such a process, to call, for the good of Central America and with verification by the United Nations, for the disarmament and demobilization of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front, so that it may join, in a framework of full legality, in the civil, institutional and political life of El Salvador.

5. The Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama state their great satisfaction at the progress made on the basis of the comprehensive and realistic national initiative undertaken by the President of Guatemala, Jorge Serrano Elías, which, through dialogue and in accordance with the approved agenda, is facilitating the inclusion of members of the irregular forces in the peaceful political process within a constitutional framework.

The Presidents also welcome the establishment in Guatemala of the National Peace Fund (FONAPAZ), intended to facilitate such inclusion, and its positive implications for the success of the process of national reconciliation.

6. To welcome the decision by the Government of Panama to participate fully and actively in the process of integration in Central America, taking into account the content of its new economic and social policy and the recommendations made by the Joint Integration Commission of Panama with regard to the phasing and complementarity of such increasing association with the process of integration in the region.

Welcoming the decision taken by Panama to begin immediate technical studies on the multilateralization of its trade relations with the other countries of the region with a view to facilitating the integration of this sister country, to amend the Constituent Treaty of the Central American Parliament and Other Political Forums, the Regional Agreement for the eradication of illicit drug trafficking and the constituent convention of the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD).

7. To instruct the Security Commission, in connection with the mandate contained in the Declaration of Puntarenas, to adopt an agreement on security, verification, control and limitation of arms and military forces, to be submitted as soon as possible.

To thank the Government of Honduras for its submission of the draft Treaty on Central American Security and to refer the Treaty to the Security Commission for study and consideration.

8. To activate the Organization of Central American States (ODECA) as a regional institutional system in order to provide follow-up for all decisions adopted at the summits and to coordinate their implementation. To this end, they instruct the Executive Commission, on a priority basis, to negotiate and conclude, within a maximum term of 90 days, a protocol to update the legal framework of ODECA, to reflect current developments and needs. The Executive Commission, in such negotiations, shall consider the drafts on institutional frameworks submitted to it.

In order to ensure appropriate follow-up and coordination in terms of implementation of decisions adopted at the summits, with respect to the institutional framework in Central America, to establish, on an interim basis, the Community Council, comprising the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and the ministers responsible for Central American economic integration and regional development. In the case of intersectoral matters, the ministers responsible for the relevant sectors shall also participate.

Certain matters shall be the exclusive responsibility of the respective ministers. Proposals emanating from this Community Council shall be coordinated with the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, who shall prepare the agendas for the presidential summits.

To instruct the competent authorities to submit a proposal, within 90 days, for the establishment of machinery to ensure the ongoing funding of the activities of the Permanent Secretariat of the General Treaty on Central American Economic Integration.

To instruct also the Executive Commission to evaluate, having regard for the relevant authorities, the legal frameworks of each of the broad range of regional forums and authorities, bearing in mind the potential for their integration within the institutional context.

9. To state their approval of the beginning of the preparatory work for the establishment of the Central American Parliament. With the aim of promoting participation by all the countries of the region in the Parliament and without prejudice to its establishment as intended, the Central American Presidents hereby sign a Protocol to its Constituent Treaty, with the aim of extending the period provided for with respect to the holding of elections to 36 months, beginning on the date of its inauguration, and of allowing participation as observers by those countries signatories to the Treaty and its Protocols which have not elected deputies to the Parliament.

10. Aware of the need to bring Honduras into normal participation in the legal framework of the Central American Economic Integration Programme, the unrestricted free trade area and, as a step towards strengthening regional integration and guaranteeing Central America's full participation in the international economy, to express their satisfaction at the signing of the temporary multilateral free trade agreement between the Government of the Republic of Honduras and the Governments of the Republics of Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica annexed hereto.

This agreement shall be interpreted as the first step towards making Honduras a signatory to the new Treaty of Central American Economic Integration, which shall be drawn up in order to achieve these goals.

11. Aware of the important role played by the rural population and by farmers in the new regional integration strategy, to adopt and promote the plan of action for agriculture in Central America (PAC), which is annexed to this declaration.

The purpose of PAC is to stimulate agricultural production, to consolidate intraregional trade in agricultural products, to guarantee food security and to increase and diversify exports.

To instruct the ministers responsible for integration and those responsible for agriculture to implement the agreements contained in section II of PAC, in order to begin liberalization of trade in agricultural commodities under the price range system no later than 31 December 1991, by which date a uniform trade policy shall also have been defined, so that the liberalization of intraregional trade in agricultural products may be completed no later than 30 June 1992.

To recognize the Council of Ministers of Agriculture of the Central American Isthmus and its secretariat (CORECA-VI) as the institutional mechanism for linking the sector with the other Central American economic integration mechanisms.

12. To approve the creation of the Council of Central American Ministers of Health to support enthusiastically their "Central American Health Initiative" and to urge the international community to continue its support and cooperation for the implementation of that plan.

13. In view of the threat to our peoples from the spread of cholera to the Central American region, to instruct the Ministers of Health to continue taking cholera prevention measures while asking specialized international agencies to continue their technical and financial support.

In addition, to thank the media, and all community leaders for their valuable cooperation, and to ask for that cooperation to continue so that an intensive health and hygiene campaign can be carried out.

14. To create a Central American housing and human settlements council comprising the competent Ministers or officials of each country of the Central American isthmus.

15. To reaffirm that the Central American Bank of Economic Integration (BCIE) is the proper agency through which to channel additional external resources in support of the region's development and economic integration. In view of the progress made towards strengthening BCIE financially and institutionally and, in particular, in view of the recent inclusion of the Republics of China and Venezuela as extraregional members, the parties resolve to continue their full support for its operations in the region.

16. To highlight the progress of the work of the Association for Democracy and Development in Central America (ADD), which is a valuable initiative by friendly countries to spur cooperation in the Central American isthmus through a programme aimed at strengthening democratic institutions and supporting the economic and social development of the region. This unconditional contribution, which will supplement existing cooperation arrangements, commits the countries of the isthmus to defining their priorities; accordingly they entrust their Ministers for Foreign Affairs with the task of identifying as soon as possible, in coordination with the appropriate authorities, the regional projects to be presented at the forthcoming meetings of the Coordinating Committee and the Plenary Assembly.

17. To emphasize the importance of creating a regional forum for dialogue and support for integration in which the Government will participate together with business, labour, the academic sector and other interested parties.

To encourage the creation, as suggested by the Sanford Commission, of a coordinating commission for Central American development which would meet in Managua and would be a means whereby Governments could consult with the various public and private sectors with a view to achieving the economic reactivation of the region.

18. Noting the progress made in the implementation of the Plan of Action of the International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA) to help the uprooted peoples of the region, to exhort the international community to support both the new priorities demanded by the changes that have taken place in Central America and the proposals based on those priorities that will be presented to it at the second international meeting of its follow-up committee, to be held in 1992.

19. To express their satisfaction with the proposal made by the Commission of the European Communities to the Council of Ministers for approval of the regulation extending the Generalized System of Preferences to the countries of Central America.

Accordingly, to urge the Governments of the member States of the European Community, through its Council of Ministers, to approve that proposal.

20. To instruct Ministers responsible for Central American integration and central bank presidents to consider the adoption of a practical and realistic special-case solution that would involve the immediate renegotiation of Nicaragua's intraregional debt, with preferential long-term interest rates.

21. To put in hand an urgent programme of protection, improvement, modernization and expansion of the existing transport service infrastructure in Central America and to give their full support to the proposal presented by the Ministers responsible for transport (REMITRAN) aimed at increasing trade within Central America and exports from the region.

Furthermore, to request that a project for a ground link between Central America and Panama be submitted as soon as possible.

22. Considering the importance of the educational and cultural integration of Central America, to give their support to the relevant Convention arrived at by the competent Ministers and to pursue urgently the final signature of that Convention.

23. To create a regional social affairs committee that would meet during presidential summits. The committee shall comprise the first ladies of the region and, ultimately, will contribute to the coordination and follow-up of solutions to social problems in the various sectors of the region.

Accordingly, to instruct the various national agencies to put into effect any agreements that may emerge from the committee and to request that the latter present a report on developments in each participating country at subsequent summits.

Recalling that, at its forty-fourth session, the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed 1994 International Year of the Family with the theme "Family: Resources and Responsibilities in a Changing World", to entrust the first ladies of Central America and Panama with coordinating at the national level the activities being organized to mark that important event.

24. To receive with satisfaction and to support the agreements arrived at by the first ladies' meeting which are annexed to this document, and, in that context, to promote the early adoption in their respective countries of legislative, administrative and judicial measures to combat effectively the illegal trafficking in minors in the region, accepting for consideration and analysis the basic document submitted by the first ladies, with a view to responding to that serious problem, which contravenes the rights guaranteed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

25. To support and encourage the proposed system of electric power connections between the countries of Central America (SIPAC), as recently revised, and also the carrying out of the pre-feasibility study on the electric power connections between the countries of the Central American isthmus, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela.

26. With a view to the creation of a permanent commission on drug trafficking, to instruct the Executive Commission to arrange for sufficient funding for the executive secretariat of the permanent commission to function properly.

27. To express their satisfaction with the efficient work of the Central American Commission on Environment and Development, which has made possible real progress in the protection of the region's environment. To that end, to instruct the Executive Commission as quickly as possible to analyse and make a decision on the projects submitted to it on environmental protection (see annex) and to urge upon the authorities responsible for the region's natural resources the prompt and full implementation of the Tropical Forest Action Plan for Central America.

28. To approve the following parameters for the negotiation of tariffs as agreed to by the Ministers responsible for economic integration and regional development:

(1) As of 31 December 1992, the date of entry into force of the uniform Central American tariff, the ceiling for tariffs will be 20 per cent and the floor not less than 5 per cent, with intermediate levels of 10 and 15 per cent.

(2) The countries shall agree on a list of essential products that will receive special uniform treatment. In addition, a limited list of exemptions shall be drawn up for excisable goods that may bear a tariff of more than 20 per cent.

(3) In keeping with the macroeconomic policies of the countries, a short list shall be drawn up of products that reach the agreed tariff levels by 31 December 1994, for which products a tax abatement programme shall be established.

If in the judgement of SIECA they are warranted, compensatory measures may be established to restore competitive relations.

In addition, the Presidents urge the Ministers responsible for Central American economic integration and regional development to faithfully carry out the programme for removing obstacles to trade within Central America, contained in the agreement modifying financing convention ALA 89/12 with the European Economic Community (see annex), which relates to the Central American payment system, within the time-frame agreed upon therein.

29. To conduct negotiations with Mexico within the framework and parameters previously established in the agreements signed at Tuxtla Gutiérrez. Central America will act as a region through the committee for promoting economic complementarity between Mexico and Central America, without prejudice to any bilateral progress which countries may achieve on an individual basis.

Such progress shall be reported to the committee in order to achieve the objective of the development of a free-trade area.

To express our satisfaction at the agreement reached on the bases for a framework agreement on trade and investment between Venezuela and the Central American countries, open to accession by the Republic of Panama, which confirms the principle of asymmetry in a context of generosity, taking into account the relative development of the contracting parties and the fact that the agreement contributes to the acceleration of Latin American integration and enhances the international competitiveness of the economies of the region, while promoting the integral development of our societies.

To reiterate the need to accelerate the negotiations with the Government of the United States of America to enable the countries of the Central American region to benefit from the provisions of the Americas Initiative. In this connection, we urge the United States of America to speed up the negotiations on the signing of free-trade agreements between the Central American countries and the United States of America, within the limits placed on the Executive branch by the United States Congress, known as the fast track legislation. Central America will act as a region, without prejudice to any bilateral progress which countries may achieve on an individual basis. Such progress shall be reported to the Ministers responsible for integration. Central America urges Canada to participate in the trade liberalization arrangements which the United States of America and Mexico have offered to Central America.

To draw attention to the efforts of the Government of Colombia to strengthen cooperation with Central America and to open up the Colombian market to export products from the Central American region.

30. To welcome the positive response of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to the establishment of a consultative support group for the Central American region and to urge it to continue the studies and analyses necessary for the progress of the work of that group. To welcome also the initiative of the President of IDB, Mr. Enrique Iglesias, to provide support to the various institutions that serve the region.

31. To express their satisfaction at the progress achieved by the different authorities, forums and agencies involved in the process of economic integration, as described in the progress report on implementation of the mandates of the summits of Central American Presidents, submitted by the Ministers responsible for integration and regional development, and which is annexed to this Declaration.

32. To underscore the significance of the First Ibero-American Summit, to be held in Guadalajara, Mexico, which will seek modalities for elaborating strategies to make the relations of cooperation between the Ibero-American countries stronger and fruitful, thereby giving to Central America further scope for the pursuit of its objectives and interests.

33. To recognize the importance of strengthening ties between Central America and other subregions and, in this connection, to note with satisfaction the forthcoming ministerial meeting of Central American and CARICOM countries scheduled for the second half of November of this year at San Pedro Sula, Honduras, at which priority attention will be paid to issues related to cooperation and interregional trade.

34. To welcome the agreements reached at the first meeting of Ministers of Planning and the second meeting of Ministers of Labour of Central America and Panama, urging them to continue their efforts aimed at achieving their objectives.

35. To receive with particular interest the suggestions of the regional commission of small and medium-sized producers for food security in Central America, and to instruct the relevant authorities to consider and analyse the report of this commission at an early date in order to seek an appropriate response to the problem discussed in the aforementioned report.

36. To support the work of the University for Peace and to appeal to the international community to support the initiative of Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, Secretary-General of the United Nations, aimed at strengthening this international organization, which has its headquarters in the region, through a Fund for Peace.

37. To note with satisfaction the agreement concluded by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, aimed at coordinating candidacies to fill vacancies in international organizations, including those in Central America.

38. To stress the significance for the region of the candidacy of Dr. Bernd Niehaus Quesada, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship of Costa Rica, for the post of Secretary-General of the Organization of American States; accordingly they decide to extend their full support for that aspiration, as a gesture of solidarity and a reflection of the spirit of fraternity that prevails in the Central American region.

In this connection, the Presidents of El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Panama instruct their Ministers for Foreign Affairs to take in a coordinated manner the necessary steps to promote this important candidacy, within the framework of the integration and the new projection of the Central American isthmus at the international level.

39. To meet in the Republic of Honduras on 12 and 13 December of this year and to give priority consideration to social topics in order to expedite the elaboration and implementation of a regional programme for the reduction of poverty, which will combine the promotion of human development dimension with that of increasing the productive capacity and incomes of the most vulnerable groups.

40. The Presidents of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama thanked the President of El Salvador, Mr. Alfredo F. Cristiani Burkard, and through him the Government and people of El Salvador, for their hospitality and kindness, which contributed significantly to the success of the meeting.

San Salvador, Republic of El Salvador, 17 July 1991.

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